

# County Snapshot

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Located on the California coast, **San Luis Obispo County** is bordered by Monterey County to the north, Kern County to the east, Santa Barbara County to the south, and the Pacific Ocean on the west.

San Luis Obispo County's population is projected to reach 392,300 by the year 2020, an increase of 54 percent over the current population.

The 1999 annual average statistics show the civilian labor force for San Luis Obispo County to be 110,600 with an unemployment rate of 3.3 percent. This is significantly lower than the state's rate of 5.2 percent for the same year.

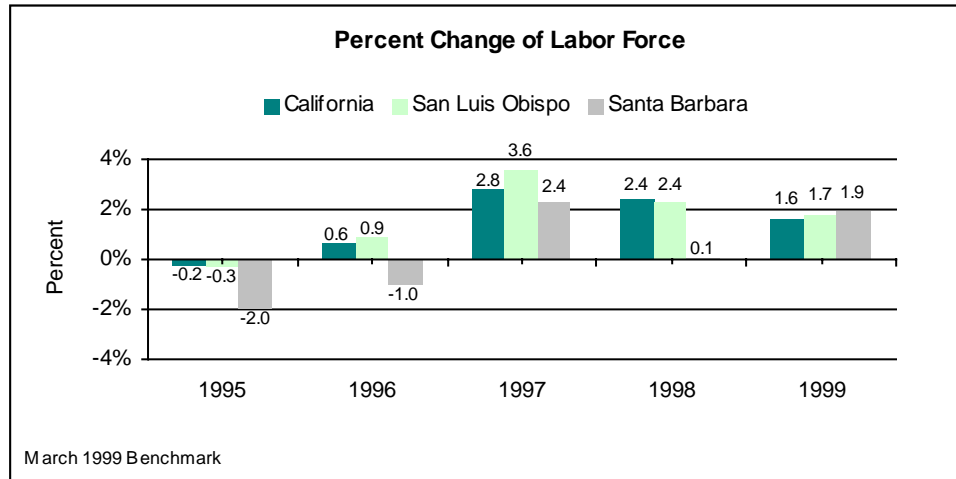
San Luis Obispo's economy is based largely on tourism and education and, as a result, services, government and retail trade are dominant industries. Services accounts for over 24 percent of total employment and government accounts for 23 percent. Retail trade makes up about 21 percent of the total, with a majority of the jobs available in the eating and drinking places sector.

Projections indicate that by 2004 most of the new jobs in San Luis Obispo's nonfarm wage and salary employment will be in the same three industry sectors. Services, the fastest growing sector, is projected to add 3,100 jobs, a gain of almost 15 percent. Government will grow by 13 percent with the greatest growth in local government, and retail trade is expected to grow by almost 11 percent.

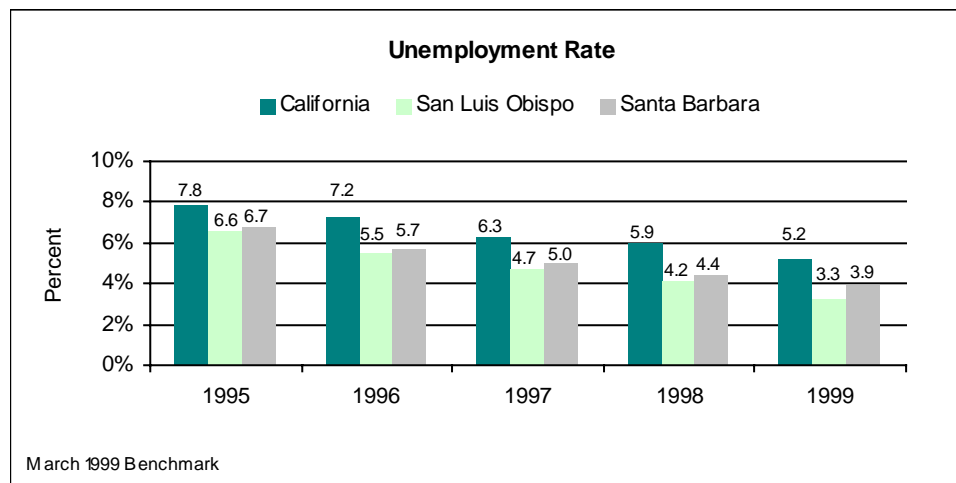
Labor market conditions in San Luis Obispo County have been steadily improving over the last five years. The county should continue to record job growth and declining unemployment rates.

## LABOR FORCE

From 1995 to 1999, cumulative growth in the civilian labor force in San Luis Obispo County was almost 9 percent with the greatest growth, 3.6 percent, occurring in 1997. Neighboring Santa Barbara County recorded 3.3 percent growth over the same years. In 1999, growth in labor force in both counties was slightly higher than the 1.6 percent growth recorded for the state.

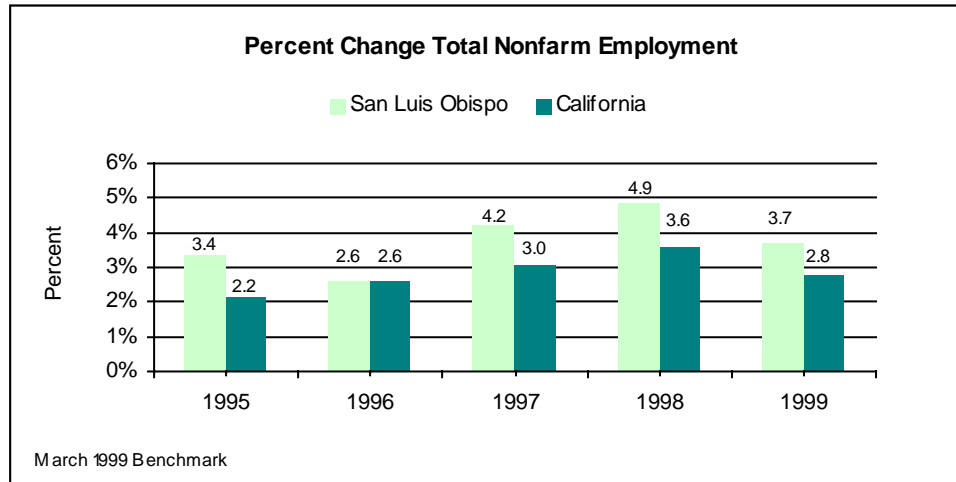


Since 1995, the annual average unemployment rates for both San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara counties have been consistently lower than the rate for the state, indicative of employment opportunities in the area. In 1999, San Luis Obispo County recorded a low of 3.3 percent compared to 5.2 percent for the state.

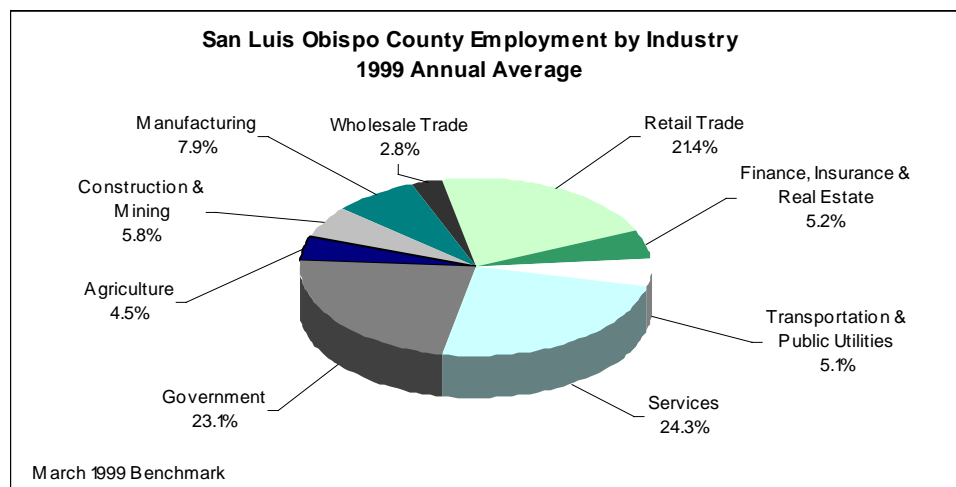


## INDUSTRY EMPLOYMENT

Job growth creates opportunity and is considered to be one measure of economic health. San Luis Obispo County has consistently outpaced the state in growth of nonfarm wage and salary employment. Over the years 1995 to 1999, the county's payroll employment grew by 12,500 jobs, a gain of over 16 percent. The greatest growth, 4.9 percent, was recorded in 1998.



In 1999, the services, government, and retail trade industry divisions dominated employment in San Luis Obispo County. Projections in nonfarm employment for this area indicate that the same three divisions will account for over 79 percent of the 9,800 job growth forecast from 1997 to 2004.



## OCCUPATIONAL EMPLOYMENT

Demographic trends, shifts in demands for products or services, technological innovations and the way business is conducted are some of the variables that drive employment in an occupation up or down. Also, occupations which have large employment and high turnover rates generally provide the most job openings. San Luis Obispo County is projected to have employment opportunities not only in the high turnover occupations but also in the more technologically advanced categories.

Associated Occupations	<b>SERVICES</b> <b>1997 – 2004 Projected Growth 14.8%</b>
	<b>Computer Support Specialist</b> – 130 job openings. Provide technical assistance and training to computer system users. They investigate and resolve computer software and hardware problems for users. Bachelor's Degree. Median Hourly Wage - \$11.89
	<b>General Office Clerks</b> – 130 job openings. Performs a wide variety of tasks. Clerical duties may be assigned in accordance with the office procedures of the individual establishments and may include a combination of bookkeeping, typing, stenography, office machine operation, and filing. Short-term on-the-job training. Median Hourly Wage - \$8.88
	<b>Laborers, Landscaping / Groundskeeping</b> – 120 job openings. Maintain grounds of property using hand or power tools or equipment. May work in nursery facility or at customer location. Workers typically perform a variety of tasks. Short-term on-the-job training. Median Hourly Wage - \$7.83
	<b>General Managers, Top Executives</b> – 110 job openings. Include both top and mid-level managers whose duties and responsibilities are too diverse and general in nature to be classified in any functional or line area of management and administration. Work Experience, plus a Bachelor's or higher. Median Hourly Wage - \$23.56
	<b>Human Services Workers</b> – 90 job openings. Assist Social Group Workers and Caseworkers with developing, organizing and conducting programs to prevent and resolve problems relevant to substance abuse and human relationships. Moderate-term on-the-job training. Median Hourly Wage - \$11.05
Associated Occupations	<b>GOVERNMENT</b> <b>1997 – 2004 Projected Growth 13.3%</b>
	<b>Corrections Officers And Jailers</b> – 200 job openings. Guard inmates in penal or rehabilitative institutions in accordance with established regulations and procedures. May guard prisoners in transit. Long-term on-the-job training. Median Hourly Wage - \$20.01
	<b>Police Patrol Officers</b> – 100 job openings. Maintain order, enforce laws and ordinances, protect life and property in an assigned patrol district or beat. Patrol on foot or in a vehicle; investigate accidents; apprehend, arrest and process prisoners; and give evidence in court. Long-term on-the-job training. Median Hourly Wage - \$22.70
	<b>Water Treatment Plant Operators</b> – 60 job openings. Operate or control an entire process or system of machines, often through the use of panelboards, control boards, or semi-automatic equipment, to transfer or treat water and/or liquid waste. Long-term on-the-job training. Median Hourly Wage - \$18.29
	<b>Recreation Workers</b> – 50 job openings. Conduct recreation activities with groups in public, private, or volunteer agencies or recreation facilities. Bachelor's Degree. Median Hourly Wage - \$8.42
	<b>Fire Fighters</b> – 40 job openings. Control and extinguish fires, protect life and property, maintain equipment as employees of city township, State or Federal Government. Long-term on-the-job training. Median Hourly Wage - \$14.74
Associated Occupations	<b>RETAIL TRADE</b> <b>1997 – 2004 Projected Growth 10.9%</b>
	<b>Salespersons, Retail</b> – 480 job openings. Get the customer interested by describing the merchandise and showing how it is used. May also order merchandise, stock shelves, mark price tags, take inventory and prepare displays. Short-term on-the-job training. Median Hourly Wage - \$7.23
	<b>Cashiers</b> – 310 job openings. Handle cash and credit payments, make change, give receipts, account for all payments, and perform related clerical duties. Short-term on-the-job training. Median Hourly Wage - \$7.25
	<b>Combined Food Preparation And Service Workers</b> – 170 job openings. Do both food preparation and food service. Short-term on-the-job training. Median Hourly Wage - \$6.19
	<b>Food Preparation Workers</b> - 140 job openings. Perform a variety of food preparation duties, such as preparing cold foods and maintaining and cleaning kitchen work areas, equipment, and utensils. Short-term on-the-job training. Median Hourly Wage - \$6.59
	<b>Waiters And Waitresses</b> – 110 job openings. Serve food and drink to customers. Duties may include explanation about how the meal is prepared, wine recommendations or simple food preparation at the table. Short-term on-the-job training. Median Hourly Wage - \$5.99

This **County Snapshot** is a product of:  
State of California  
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